The United Nations Global Compact (UN Global Compact) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the political declaration for the United Nations General Assembly Special Session against Corruption (UNGASS). As we are in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, now more than ever, we must strive for global cooperation and unity across countries, sectors and the international community.

Political Declaration
Corruption remains one of the greatest obstacles to economic and social development, undermining the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, tainting business environments and particularly affecting vulnerable communities. UNGASS is occurring at a critical point, where we, as an international community, must determine how best to work together to eliminate corruption to achieve the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement and end long-standing systemic issues. It is with this contribution the UN Global Compact calls upon Governments to recall the intention and spirit of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and to reaffirm and strengthen their commitment to its founding tenets and ultimately enhance transparency and integrity, build robust and resilient systems and promote greater collaboration through collective action and multilateralism.

1. Move beyond ratification to fully implement and enforce the tenets of the UNCAC

As the only legally binding universal anti-corruption instrument with 140 signatories and 187 parties,¹ the UNCAC is uniquely positioned to strengthen and align government responses to address corruption risks. While commendable progress has been made since its entry into force in 2005, improvements with respect to enacting and enforcing relevant laws are still required. Governments should move beyond merely ratifying the UNCAC to focus on the domestication of anti-corruption policies and laws and establishment of proper enforcement mechanisms. Specifically, the UN Global Compact calls upon Governments to revisit Article 12 Private Sector of the UNCAC and to reaffirm their commitment to fighting corruption by taking appropriate actions to enable fair competition and ensure clean books and records. Moreover, the UN Global Compact encourages Governments to implement systems of incentives and sanctions to promote corporate integrity and the reporting of corruption.

2. Enhance transparency and integrity in public procurement and contract processes

Public contracting is the world’s largest marketplace, covering $10 trillion of spending every year. And one in every three dollars spent by Government is on a contract with the private sector.² Furthermore, 24.3 percent of businesses worldwide are expected to give gifts to secure Government contracts.³ Corrupt public procurement contributes to poverty and inequality and diverts money away from meeting basic social needs. It also undermines innovation, sacrifices quality and distorts markets. Given the high proportion of national budgets typically allocated to the procurement of goods and services and close interaction between the private sector and public officials, it is essential that public procurement and contract processes are fair and transparent and monitored for corruption risks. The UN Global Compact calls upon Governments to commit to enhancing the transparency and integrity of public procurement and contract processes through public advertising of all procurement cases, as permissible by certain laws and regulations, and to

² Open Contracting Partnership, https://www.open-contracting.org/what-is-open-contracting/
embrace information technology and innovative solutions to advance current systems. Aligned with this commitment, the UN Global Compact calls upon Governments to support private sector disclosure initiatives and to ensure accountability and transparency in public finances.

3. **Build robust and resilient systems to reduce the impacts of disasters**
   Disasters, both natural and manmade, will continue to challenge Governments and global markets. Such events also heighten corruption risks due to the rapid influx and channelling of funds, pressure to act quickly and disruption to anti-corruption compliance programmes. The UN Global Compact calls upon Governments to strengthen disaster response and recovery and build resilient systems to reduce negative impacts, protect the most vulnerable and ultimately foster trust in institutions, laws and systems. Consistent with the UN Global Compact’s Ten Principles, these systems should embody Governments’ fundamental responsibilities in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. Further, these systems should be open and transparent, whereby Governments apply and communicate policies in a consistent, inclusive and ethical manner and publically disclose contracts and payments, as appropriate. The UN Global Compact also encourages Governments to incorporate oversight mechanisms to address conflicts of interest, price gouging, disproportionate resource allocation, counterfeit goods and other such corruption risks that deepen inequalities and leave the poor susceptible to bribery and extortion.

4. **Support anti-corruption collective action efforts and reaffirm the importance of multilateralism**
   While individual actions are essential, they are not enough to end corruption. Governments, businesses, civil society and other relevant organizations must join forces to identify and resolve the problem of corruption from multiple angles. Governments should commit to actively engage and support the private sector in anti-corruption collective action initiatives to ensure a level playing field and improve market conditions. Similarly, the UN Global Compact calls upon Governments to assist and collaborate with one another in anti-corruption efforts. As the world is becoming increasingly interconnected and corruption schemes more sophisticated, multilateralism will be critical as Governments and the private sector spread their influence and reach. The UN Global Compact encourages Governments to work together on matters, including asset recovery and joint investigations, and continuously adapt their policies and systems to reaffirm the importance of global cooperation and national commitment.

As the international community prepares for UNGASS in this time of global crisis, Governments, businesses, civil society, non-government organizations and other parties are called upon to act in solidarity. While the UN Global Compact calls upon Governments to act consistent with the four actions foreshadowed above, it is imperative that the private sector respects national rules and regulations and all stakeholders work together to stem the tide of corruption and leave no-one behind. The UN Global Compact continues to support the private sector by equipping them with the necessary tools and resources to uphold the standards of the UNCAC. But ultimately, we must come together and live the tenets of the UNCAC in order to combat the scourge of corruption and ensure the broader realization of the Sustainable Development Goals.

**About the United Nations Global Compact**
As a special initiative of the UN Secretary-General, the United Nations Global Compact is a call to companies everywhere to align their operations and strategies with ten universal principles in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. Launched in 2000, the mandate of the UN Global Compact is to guide and support the global business community in advancing UN goals and values through responsible corporate practices. With more than 10,000 companies and 3,000 non-business signatories based in over 160 countries, and more than 60 Local Networks, it is the largest corporate sustainability initiative in the world.

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4 UN Global Compact Ten Principles, https://www.unglobalcompact.org/what-is-gc/mission/principles